

Message Text

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15
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
----- 072515

R 301055Z JUL 76
FM AMEMBASSY BONN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0796
USMISSION USBERLIN
USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS
USMISSION EC BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY BERLIN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 BONN 12802

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, GW, WB, UR, GE
SUBJECT: FRG PLANS FOR NEGOTIATIONS WITH GDR AFTER THE
ELECTIONS

BEGIN SUMMARY: A SENIOR OFFICIAL IN THE FRG MINISTRY
FOR INNER-GERMAN AFFAIRS HAS TOLD US THAT THE FRG PLANS
TO NEGOTIATE WITH THE GDR AFTER THE WEST GERMAN ELEC-
TIONS ON A SERIES OF POINTS REGARDING RELATIONS BETWEEN
WEST AND EAST GERMANY. IN THESE NEGOTIATIONS, THE WEST
GERMANS HOPE THAT THE DESIRE FOR CREDITS WILL INCLINE
THE GDR TO COMPROMISE. END SUMMARY

1. STATE SECRETARY MORGENSTERN OF THE INNER-GERMAN
AFFAIRS MINISTRY HAS TOLD THE POLITICAL COUNSELOR THAT
THE FRG IS DEVELOPING PLANS TO NEGOTIATE WITH EAST
GERMANY AFTER THE WEST GERMAN ELECTIONS ON OCTOBER 3.
MORGENSTERN SAID THE WEST GERMANS WOULD LIKE TO ACHIEVE
SOME OF THE FOLLOWING IN THESE NEGOTIATIONS:

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--TO LOWER THE AGE OF RETIREES ABLE TO LEAVE EAST GERMANY FROM 65 TO 62 OR 60. IN THIS CONNECTION, MORGENSTERN OBSERVED THAT THE FRG HAS INFORMATION THAT WORKERS PAST 60 ARE NOT REALLY REGARDED AS FULLY PRODUCTIVE BY THE GDR, AND THAT THE EAST GERMANS MIGHT BE PREPARED TO LET SUCH WORKERS LEAVE TO JOIN THEIR FAMILIES IN THE FRG.

-- TO PERMIT MORE PEOPLE WHO ARE NOT RETIREES TO LEAVE EAST GERMANY FOR THE PURPOSE OF JOINING RELATIVES IN WEST GERMANY. MORGENSTERN SAID THAT OVER THE LAST FEW YEARS ABOUT 13,000 PEOPLE OF WORKING AGE HAD BEEN LEAVING THE GDR EVERY YEAR UNDER THIS PROGRAM. MANY OF THEM, HE SAID, ARE VERY YOUNG (TEENS AND TWENTIES). THE EAST GERMANS HAVE OBJECTED TO CONTINUING THIS PROGRAM, COMPLAINING THAT THEY HAD STARTED IT BECAUSE THEY THOUGHT THE DEMAND FOR EMIGRATION WOULD QUICKLY ABATE AFTER AN INITIAL FLURRY OF DEPARTURES; INSTEAD, THE DEMAND IS CONTINUING AND EVEN RISING.

-- TO ESTABLISH MORE TELEPHONE CONNECTIONS BETWEEN EAST AND WEST GERMANY. IN THIS AREA, MORGENSTERN SAID THE EAST GERMANS HAVE NOT DONE AS WELL AS THEY HAD PROMISED. THEY HAVE CLAIMED TO BE ENCOUNTERING TECHNICAL OBSTACLES AND EXCHANGES OF EQUIPMENT, CLAIMS THAT MORGENSTERN IS INCLINED TO ACCEPT AT FACE VALUE.

-- TO ESTABLISH MORE BORDER CROSSING POINTS BETWEEN EAST AND WEST GERMANY. MORGENSTERN SAID THIS WAS AN ABSTRACT WEST GERMAN OBJECTIVE BUT, IN FACT, EXCEPT AT PEAK HOLIDAY TIMES NOT EVEN THOSE CROSSING POINTS ALREADY ESTABLISHED ARE REALLY NECESSARY.

-- TO TRY TO PERSUADE THE GDR TO PERMIT EMIGRATION TO OTHER COUNTRIES. ON THIS POINT, MORGENSTERN SAID HE THOUGHT THE FRG WOULD MEET CONSIDERABLE RESISTENCE. SO FAR, THE GDR HAS ONLY BEEN WILLING TO PERMIT EMIGRATION FOR PURPOSES OF FAMILY REUNION IN THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC. TO PERMIT NORMAL EMIGRATION TO THIRD COUNTRIES WOULD REPRESENT A MAJOR CHANGE OF POLICY FOR

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
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R 301055Z JUL 76
FM AMEMBASSY BONN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0797
USMISSION USBERLIN
USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS
USMISSION EC BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY BERLIN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

S E C R E T SECTION 02 OF 02 BONN 12802

EXDIS

THE GDR.

-- TO TRY TO GET THE GDR TO REVERSE THE ORDER TO SHOOT AT PEOPLE ON THE BORDER (THE SO-CALLED "SCHIESS-BEFEHL"). THIS, MORGENSTERN SAID, WAS A MAJOR PSYCHOLOGICAL POINT FOR THE FRG. THE TENDENCY OF EAST GERMAN BORDER GUARDS TO GO FOR THE GUN, AS IN THE RECENT BUBBERS CASE, WEIGHED HEAVILY ON THE OVERALL TENOR OF FRG-GDR RELATIONS. IN SOME CASES, AS ALONG THE ELBE RIVER, THE FRG HAD BEEN ABLE TO PERSUADE THE GDR TO CHANGE ITS INSTRUCTIONS VERY DISCREETLY--ALTHOUGH THE DETAILED NEGOTIATIONS ON THIS WERE NOT YET COMPLETE. WHAT THE FRG HOPED WAS THAT THE GDR WOULD INSTRUCT ITS BORDER PERSONNEL TO SHOOT ONLY IN THE CASE OF MAXIMUM PROVOCATION. IT WAS BY NO MEANS CERTAIN, HOWEVER, WHETHER THIS OBJECTIVE COULD BE ATTAINED.

2. MORGENSTERN SAID THAT THE GDR WAS HAVING MAJOR ECONOMIC DIFFICULTIES AND WOULD BE PREPARED TO MAKE POLITICAL CONCESSIONS IN ORDER TO
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OBTAIN FOREIGN EXCHANGE. HE SAID THE RISE IN RUSSIAN RAW MATERIAL PRICES AND THE WIDENING TECHNOLOGICAL LAG BEHIND THE WEST WAS PUTTING MAJOR PRESSURES ON EAST GERMAN FOREIGN EXCHANGE RESERVES AND ON THE EAST GERMAN ECONOMY AS A WHOLE. THE EAST GERMAN ECONOMIC SITUATION, HE SAID, WAS NOW LESS FAVORABLE THAN TWO OR THREE YEARS AGO AND IT WAS CONTINUING TO DETERIORATE. HE SAID THAT EVEN THE DM 1 BILLION CREDIT THAT THE EAST GERMANS HAD REQUESTED WOULD NOT BE ENOUGH TO MEET THEIR NEEDS OVER THE NEXT YEAR OR TWO. AS AN EXAMPLE OF EAST GERMAN DESIRE FOR IMMEDIATE FOREIGN EXCHANGE, HE SAID THE EAST GERMANS HAD RECENTLY OFFERED TO DISCOUNT THEIR ITALIAN CREDITS TO THE FRG, ASKING THE FRG TO PAY DM 700 MILLION IN ORDER TO TAKE OVER DM 800 MILLION WORTH OF ITALIAN DEBTS TO THE GDR.

3. MORGENSTERN SAID THAT ONE COULD EVEN SPECULATE THAT SOME OF THE RECENT EAST GERMAN TOUGHNESS REFLECTED A DESIRE TO ESTABLISH A TOUGH BARGAINING SITUATION BEFORE THE WEST GERMAN ELECTIONS IN ORDER TO HAVE MORE TO OFFER THE FRG AFTER THE ELECTIONS. FOR EXAMPLE, HE SAID THAT EAST GERMAN COMPLAINTS ABOUT THE FIGURE OF 13,000 EMIGRANTS WAS PROBABLY INTENDED TO MAKE THE FRG PAY A PRICE TO MAINTAIN THE LEVEL OF EMIGRATION RATHER THAN TO INCLINE TO ASK FOR MORE. HE THOUGHT EVEN SUCH POLICIES AS THE RECENT APPARENT STIFFENING OF EAST GERMAN BORDER BEHAVIOR MIGHT REFLECT A DESIRE TO GENERATE PROBLEMS THAT THE FRG WOULD PAY TO REMOVE. HOWEVER, HE OBSERVED THAT THIS WAS PURE SPECULATION SINCE ONE COULD ALSO DEVELOP OTHER ARGUMENTS FOR EAST GERMAN BEHAVIOR.

4. COMMENT: WE ARE UNABLE TO COMMENT MEANINGFULLY ON REPEATED REPORTS OF EAST GERMAN ECONOMIC WEAKNESS COMING FROM WEST GERMAN SOURCES. THE EAST GERMAN DESIRE TO DISCOUNT ITALIAN CREDITS COULD REFLECT FOREIGN EXCHANGE DIFFICULTIES, AS MORGENSTERN SUGGESTS, OR A DESIRE TO DISPOSE OF WHAT THE GDR MAY REGARD AS A POTENTIALLY BAD DEBT. WE WOULD WELCOME ANY INFORMATION THAT ADDRESSEES MAY DEVELOP ON THIS SUBJECT, SINCE IT APPEARS TO BE CENTRAL TO WEST GERMAN DIPLOMATIC PLANNING.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FOREIGN RELATIONS, POLICIES, NEGOTIATIONS, EMIGRANTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 30 JUL 1976
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ShawDG
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976BONN12802
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760294-1133
From: BONN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t1976076/aaaaaewq.tel
Line Count: 217
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ShawDG
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 01 APR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <01 APR 2004 by greeneet>; APPROVED <12 AUG 2004 by ShawDG>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: FRG PLANS FOR NEGOTIATIONS WITH GDR AFTER THE ELECTIONS BEGIN SUMMARY: A SENIOR OFFICIAL IN THE FRG MINIS
TAGS: PFOR, GE, WB, UR, GC
To: STATE USBERLIN
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006